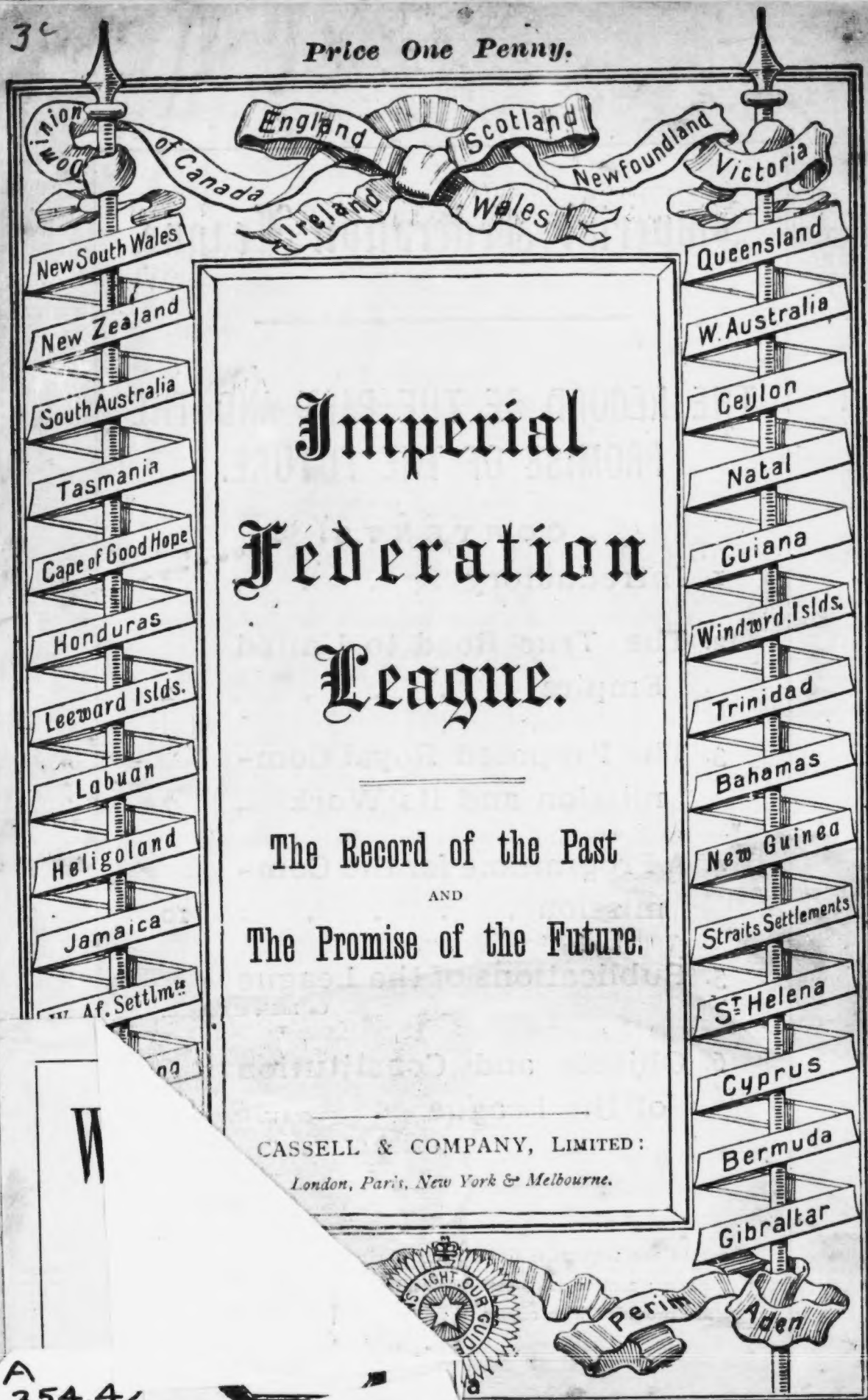


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Special Report, October, 1886.

Imperial Federation League.

THE RECORD OF THE PAST AND THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE.

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Members are requested to do all in their power to circulate this
Paper; and to take care that all Clubs, Reading-Rooms, &c.,
are provided with copies.

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Imperial Federation League.

THE RECORD OF THE PAST,

AND

THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHAT THE LEAGUE HAS DONE, IS DOING,
AND HOPES TO DO.

THE progress of the League has been extraordinarily rapid. The first period—that which was necessarily devoted to arousing public interest and public attention—is now over. The favourable reception of a deputation of the League by the Prime Minister, and the subsequent promise of an inquiry under the auspices of the Imperial Government, have brought us to the beginning of a new and still more important epoch.

At this point a fitting occasion has arisen for once more reminding members of the League and friends of the cause, of the spirit in which we are seeking success, the means by which we hope to attain it, and the nature of the triumph we desire to win.

The League has requested the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to deal with the question of Federation. It seems probable that such a Commission will before long be appointed. What do we wish it to do? And how do we wish it to act?

As an answer to these questions, we reprint from the recent publications of the League some passages which, we think, will throw light upon the points raised, and will be of service to those who, by speech, by their pen, or by any other means, are desirous of promoting the unity of the Empire.

The True Road to United Empire.

"BY all means," says a great English writer, "build your castles in the air, then put the foundations under them." Sir John Harrington, as Mr. Froude tells us, built his castle in the air some 300 years ago, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and called it "Oceana"—the Great Commonwealth of English-speaking nations, united under one law, instinct with one purpose, established throughout the world. It is now our business, in the year of grace 1886, in the reign of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, to bring down the castle from the clouds, and to put the foundations under it.

Already there are many busy workers engaged upon the task, and from day to day the number grows. A few there are who, like the evil genii of the Eastern story, are engaged in pulling down and destroying the rising fabric. But, fortunately, the evil influences are being exorcised, and their mischievous activity diminished, by the growing power of a healthy public opinion. In addition to those who are working for good and those who are working for evil, there is the vast mass of those who are still indifferent, doubting, unconvinced, or uninformed, most of all, and above all, uninformed. It is the hope and aim of the Imperial Federation League to add to the number of workers, to diminish the number of idlers, and to blot out of political existence the cavillers and enemies.

WE MUST KNOW WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR.

But, however much the England of Queen Victoria may differ from the England of Queen Elizabeth, in one matter its people remain the same. Now, as then, they will insist upon knowing what is the cause they are fighting for, and what is the end which their efforts, if successful, will accomplish. In our case, happily, this knowledge is open to all. The aim and object of the Imperial Federation League is as certain and definite as the keenest lover of definitions could require. We know **what we want**; we know **why we want it**; and every day we see more clearly **how we are going to get it**.

WHAT WE WANT.

What do we want? Let us look at the materials with which we have to deal, and the question answers itself. At this moment there are throughout the world more than fifty million men, women, and children speaking the English tongue, possessing, and proud of, the traditions of English history, reading the same books, pursuing the same ideals, acknowledging the same law. In another half century this fifty million will have grown to a hundred million. It may be a matter of regret—some of our friends would have us think so—but it is nevertheless a fact, as certain as the process of the sun, that the future of the world is with the English-speaking people. The time is within measurable distance when French, German, and Italian will be either provincial dialects or forgotten languages. The thing is certain, inevitable. One great division of the English-speaking world has already framed a wise and well-considered scheme of union among its parts. It has learnt the value of that union, it has fought to maintain it, and has now placed it beyond the reach of danger. We who belong to the other portion, not less intimately connected by interest, far more closely bound together by the ties of kindred race, desire in like manner to obtain a practical organisation, by which the whole commonwealth may **work together with its united resources for the attainment of its common ends.**

WHY WE WANT IT?

This is what we want. Next comes the question, **Why do we want it?** We want it, in the first place, on account of the benefits which it will confer. And, in the second place, on account of the evils which it will enable us to avoid.

The whole underlying principle of modern political thought is that which assumes the practical identity of human interests, and which only seeks for the best way in which the resources of every class and every locality may be best utilised for the mutual advantage of every other class and locality. There is not a man throughout the Empire, whether he works with his head or his hands, who does not know perfectly well the value of system and

organisation in his trade and calling. The statesman knows it, the lawyer knows it, the commercial man, the medical man, the tradesman, the artisan, and the labourer are all aware of it, and are all endeavouring, in one way or another, to give effect to their knowledge. We therefore desire Federation because we believe that thereby we can best secure the fullest development of the moral and material resources of the great undivided community of English-speaking people to which we belong.

OUR CAUSE IS PEACE.

For one other great end we also desire it. We live in a world in which passion and prejudice are not extinct. We know, as a matter of fact, that between communities which have no means of adjusting their differences except by diplomatic negotiations, never undertaken until the cause of difference has become acute, and always conducted under the pressure of popular feeling, war is a possibility and, alas, as history tells us, a probability. At the present moment there is—and, as long as our imperfect administrative arrangements continue, there will be—the danger of war between Great Britain and those Colonies which she persists in treating half as inferiors and half as foreigners. As the result of misunderstanding and want of proper organisation, two members of an English-speaking family may any day become at war with each other. If so, it is possible that, when that war ends, they may become friends again, allies again, but one people never again.

We desire Imperial Federation, therefore, because through it we see a certainty of **PEACE**, and the avoidance of the possibility of **WAR**.

HOW WE MEAN TO GET IT.

We have spoken of what we hope for, and have given a reason for the hope that is in us; and now, lastly, we come to the third great question, **How do we mean to get it?** Our readers will, doubtless, many of them, feel that we have now arrived at a stage beyond which we cannot go. But we can assure them that, here at least, there is no doubt in our minds, no want of clearness in our views. There is no question as to what means

we wish to adopt to help us to our end. Which of the hundred roads which open before us we should select whereby we can most rapidly reach the goal can only be a momentary matter of difference of opinion. We said that there were many willing workers engaged in building up the foundations of the great structure of Imperial Unity. It is not to-day that they have begun their labours. In the following pages we have attempted to show how, in every department of **religion, politics, administration, legislation, justice, and finance**, we have been moving forward by slow and almost imperceptible degrees towards one end. In spite of every difficulty which the indifference of politicians, the neglect and opposition of officials, and the carelessness of the public have placed in the way, the Empire has been federating itself on the line of least resistance, and, wherever official discouragement was not too great, and wherever community of interest was sufficiently strong, an incomplete but real Federation has begun, and has continued, till we now see how near we have approached to the final goal, even while we have been working without set purpose, and almost in the dark.

WHO IS ON OUR SIDE.

For the future, as in the past, we desire to commit five-sixths of the work of Federation to the great body of the people, to the merchants, the shipowners, to the artisans with their great Trades Unions, to the labourers, to all those, indeed, whom love or duty compels to carry on correspondence between one distant part of our country and another; and last, but not least, to those great federationists—the writers of books and newspapers, the makers of songs, and the creators of works of art. Working almost without a common purpose and without union, these classes have already done more than all the official blunders of twenty administrations could undo. Their work we desire to supplement only by creating the common purpose and the common end, which have so long been wanting. For the remaining portion of the work we also have our plan. We hope by pressure, by persuasion, by instruction, and, above all, by steady persistence in all three, to induce the officials in every department of administration throughout the Empire to use, and not any longer to abuse or neglect, the

opportunities which are daily given them. There is not an office, nor a department, in which a little good-will, a little thought, a little effort, might not help to knit together, to assimilate, and to harmonise the routine duties of the common life of one people. How far a little intelligence, a little good-will, a little looking ahead, a little pressure from facts too strong to be resisted, have carried us, the following pages will show. How much farther these good qualities, if granted in more ample measure, might not lead us, the most sanguine imagination can hardly discover. The great fact remains, that by properly using the existing means at their disposal in a right spirit, our legislators and administrators might imperceptibly draw closer and multiply the bonds which hold the community together until when, if ever, the idea of separation should be raised, we should find that a step which involved a dislocation of every arrangement to which we were accustomed, which could only be brought about by destroying every convenience which had become the accepted fact of our every-day life, was but the suggestion of **a madman or a traitor.**

THE LAST STEP.

It is well known to students of chemistry that there are solutions, clear and liquid as the purest water, which, if we add but a single drop to them, change almost in a moment to a wonderful series of perfect and beautiful crystalline forms; and so it may be that, ere many years have gone by, some single fact may happen, some danger from outside may press, some strong, clear-headed man may arise, and, like the transforming drop, may change in one moment the formless and fluid mass of our Imperial system into a clearly defined, truly fitted, and well organised commonwealth. That result it is not in the power of the Imperial Federation League, or of any other body, to bring about or to hasten; but it is in our power to ensure that, when the opportunity comes, the whole of the materials, which are ultimately to form and shape themselves, shall be truly in solution in the minds and in the practice of the great people for whom the beneficent change will, in the fulness of time, be accomplished.

So much for the general; now for the particular. We have

shown above the spirit in which we ought to work. What is the work we ought to do? Given our Royal Commission, how is it to justify its existence and our demand for it? We ask members of the League to read the following:—

THE PROPOSED ROYAL COMMISSION AND ITS WORK.

WHETHER or not the Prime Minister will give effect to the petition of the Deputation of the League, and will actually issue a Royal Commission, or summon a Conference for the better solution of some of the problems connected with Federation, must for the present remain uncertain. The result must be dependent upon two factors, one the goodwill and foresight of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues in wishing for the end, the other the promptness and wisdom of the friends of Federation in pointing out the means.

The former we can neither control nor create, the latter it is our obvious business to supply. Given a Royal Commission properly composed, with ample powers, and the best intentions, what is it to do?

THE ENEMIES WE HAVE TO MEET.

“Ay, there’s the rub, say the ‘smart’ critics, the moment you leave generalities and come to practical details, where is your cause?”

And indeed this form of criticism is not peculiar to the “smart” objectors only. It is the line which commends itself more than any other to the great array of the happy-go-lucky and the lazy. To do nothing and to let things slide, is so easy, gives so little trouble, that by a very simple transition what is easy becomes what is right and wise. And therefore it is that we find

so many persons fortified by all sorts of stately generalities, and well-worn platitudes, who really do believe that they have arrived at a negative conclusion by an intellectual process, instead of by one of mere drifting. However, this class is a very numerous one, a very influential one, and one well worth winning. It can be won best and soonest by a frank recognition of its peculiarities. If any one will undertake to do the thinking for it and so produce a result which is just as easy to accept as the existing state of things, its members will be just as ready to accept the new as they now are to stand by the old.

For these reasons, if for no other, it is well worth while to go a little in advance of the facts, and to picture a Royal Commission already assembled in Whitehall, with energy, authority, and goodwill, only waiting for a definite programme to begin upon. Let us see if we can supply them with a programme which, if not very complete and by no means meant to be final, may at any rate serve to occupy them profitably for a session.

But first it is necessary to recall what are and must be the limitations of such a programme, the conditions under which the inquiry is to be conducted, and the ends to the attainment of which it must be directed.

Readers of IMPERIAL FEDERATION know them pretty well, but they will bear repetition. Throughout the Empire there exist institutions common to all parts of it, giving rise to interests and needs which are felt in every part of it.

THE CONDITIONS WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH.

As we have before now pointed out, Federation has already begun along the "line of least resistance." In the scientific, the religious, the commercial and the literary world, convenience and necessity have brought into existence uniform methods, common machinery, scientific arrangement. Sometimes the organisation has come almost spontaneously. For instance, the commercial law, which regulates the procedure of every English tribunal, has never been definitely formulated as an Imperial code; it has grown with the extension of the Empire. Far more often the application of thought and reason to existing facts has

produced greater method, and as a consequence greater efficiency. The organisation of the Church, of the Nonconformist bodies, of the great Trades Unions at home and in the Colonies, has been the result of the application of the ordinary methods, known to every business man, to a new condition of things. In many, probably in all cases, there is room for improvement, for more thought, and a better system.

THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE TO SOLVE.

But everywhere the lesson is the same—system and order can alone give perfect efficiency. We have now got to apply the lesson on a larger scale to the *administration of the Empire*. It is no question of inventing common interests, they already exist; it is scarcely even a question of inventing the means of common action, to a very large extent they exist also; it is a question of organising and utilising to the best possible advantage the existing resources of the Empire for the protection and promotion of its common interests. In a word it is the application of mind to matter.

THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE.

Already the process has begun, and has gone further than most of us imagine. The Board of Trade, most unconsciously, has long been a worker in the cause of Federation. In a blind half hearted way, the Naval and Military Departments and the Post Office have all been doing the same work. The draughtsman who inserted the words "the British Empire" in an international copyright Act, was a splendid pioneer in the cause. By one stroke of the pen he formulated the great and essential proposition of every true Federalist, viz., "Every country under the Union Jack is *Home*. Every other country is foreign."

And last, but by no means least, the learned judges of the Privy Council have been anticipating the result which one day the League will be instrumental in bringing about, and in every decision have been affirming the charter of our incorporation, and asserting that there are matters of common concern to

the Empire, which can be wisely and effectively dealt with by an Imperial authority acting in the interest of all parts of the Empire. But in whatever department it be that the traces of organisation are found, one fact appears with respect to all of them. Whatever has been done, whether it be little or much, thought and reason have been applied to the doing of it. Those have done best who have thought and reasoned most correctly ; and those have reasoned most correctly who were best acquainted with the conditions with which they had to deal, and the means which they had at their disposal in dealing with them. Bearing these facts in mind the Imperial Federation League has now formulated its demand, and has asked the Prime Minister to afford to those who can give practical effect to conclusions deliberately arrived at, the best possible means of forming those conclusions correctly as a prelude to applying them effectually in dealing officially with the common interests of the Empire.

With this somewhat lengthy exordium, let us return to our original intention of laying before our readers an outline, which, incomplete and unsatisfactory as it may be, will still serve as a practical guide to a Royal Commission, anxious not to separate without having done some good to the Empire.

A PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMISSION.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR A ROYAL COMMISSION
ANXIOUS TO PROMOTE THE CAUSE OF IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

To divide the inquiry into branches, viz.—(1) Naval, (2) Military, (3) Law, (a) Commercial, (b) Criminal, (4) Communications, (a) Postal, (b) Telegraphic, (5) Civil Service, (6) Learned Professions (diplomas, etc.), (7) Emigration, including, (a) Statistical bureau, (b) Labour bureau, (8) Diplomatic, (9) Tariffs, (10) Miscellaneous.

Under each of these headings to make such inquiries as may best show how far common interests exist through the Empire with respect to each subject, how far a common machinery has been already devised to deal with them, and how far that machinery may be supplemented by wisely-conceived additions. Thus, taking the various heads in succession, the following lines of investigation would naturally suggest themselves.

(1) NAVAL.

Call as witnesses Admiral Hornby, Sir Charles Nugent, Captain Colomb, etc. Assume the existence of a war with any of the maritime powers.

Ask any of the witnesses what would be the points threatened, the minimum of the appliances—whether ships, guns, or men—necessary to defend them; and, lastly, what proportion of that minimum could, by the expenditure of any conceivable amount of money be made available within any reasonable time. Prosecute this inquiry resolutely—show the naked facts as they exist; they are already known to everybody except those whom they most concern. Then get hold of the commercial witnesses, ask them what the meaning of a fortnight's stoppage in the Atlantic, the Pacific, or the West Indian trade, means in hard cash—first to the people of England, secondly to the Colonies. Ask what, in their opinion, would be the reasonable contribution payable by each portion of the Empire, as an insurance against this calamity.

This will naturally lead to the questions of an **Imperial fleet**, an **Imperial contribution for naval purposes**, the establishment of **naval training colleges and schools** for officers and men, in all parts of the Empire, the adoption of an **Imperial naval ensign**, and the proper **subordination of all officers** to a central authority.

(2) MILITARY.

To inquire how far the existing **facilities for obtaining commissions** in the Colonies (e.g., Canadian Military College)

made use of, and how far they might be extended. To **tabulate the rates of pay** received by non-commissioned officers and men in the various permanent forces embodied in Canada, Australia, and elsewhere. To compare them with the current rate of wages in each country, and to deduce therefrom the same conclusion, throwing light upon the **possibility of raising an Imperial force** on uniform terms throughout the Empire. To consider how far the **Royal Marines** might be made the nucleus of such a force. To consider the condition of the various **military arsenals** throughout the Empire, their organisation for mutual support, and the especial desirability of strengthening the existing depôt at **Vancouver**, and creating a new one, including an arsenal, at **Sydney**.

(3) LAW (*a, Commercial and Civil Law*).

To examine leading merchants and shippers as to whether there be **any incongruity in the mercantile** codes in force in different parts of the Empire which causes serious inconvenience, and which might be removed without difficulty. To ascertain whether the **privilege of practising in any British Court**, now granted to members of the British Bar, might not be extended to the profession in the Colonies.

(*b, Criminal Law*).

To receive evidence as to the extent to which the **powers of British criminal courts** to enforce their authority, in all parts of the Queen's dominions, might be increased. And as a kindred subject to inquire whether writs, judgments, and subpoenas might not be served and enforced throughout the Empire with greater ease and less formality and complication.

(4) COMMUNICATIONS (*a, postal*).

To tabulate the exact **loss on over-sea postage** within the Empire at the present moment. The loss on the present amount of matter mailed, if carried **at a penny rate**. To

obtain estimates as to **probable increase** of communication owing to (a) natural growth, (b) increased facilities.

To state the loss, if any, which, on the basis of such estimates, would be involved by the new change in five years from the present date.

To inquire **how far subsidies are really required** at all to ensure the regular and swift transmission of the mails, and whether, if a subsidy be necessary, it might not be paid in some other form than hard cash, e.g., preferential employment of the subsidised company's shipping in time of war, special privileges in time of peace, &c.

The **main points** for the Commission to bear in mind in respect of this branch of the inquiry would be (1) the utter untrustworthiness of the regular postal officials as witnesses. The Postal Departments here, though full of the best intentions, have been utterly demoralised by the Treasury doctrine which they have been forced to accept, to the effect that the Post Office is and must remain a revenue department. The result of which radical misconception is that our postal service has sunk from the position of first to that of nearly last among civilised nations.

(2) The Commission must bear in mind the reasonable and logical position in which the whole question ought to be left, namely, a position in which the United Empire ought to treat as **one solid postal unit** with the crowd of smaller nationalities which make up the International Postal Union. At present it is the old fable of the bundle of sticks over again. New South Wales or Victoria, it is true, are represented in International Congresses, but they speak with the authority of one million voices, when they might speak **with the authority of fifty million.**

(b, *Telegraphic*).

To examine the chief officials of the various telegraphic companies, to ask them, "**Where are the shore ends of your cables landed?** what protection have they at present? how soon, how easily, and how certainly **would they be cut** in the event of war? What, in your opinion, would be the extent of the military and commercial disaster which would be involved by

this sudden collapse of the power of speech between different parts of the Empire? If the disaster be too great for you to describe in adequate terms, give a few figures and facts, which you think likely to impress the English people with the absolute folly and wickedness of neglecting every ordinary precaution for the protection of their means of communication. And, lastly, give your opinion, by the light of your great experience, as to the **best methods of establishing and maintaining telegraphic communication** both in peace and war, with a special reference to a proper line *viâ* the Cape to Australia, and a line from **Esquimalt to Port Darwin** rendering us independent of the present precarious communication through the Mediterranean.

(5) CIVIL SERVICE.

To tabulate the posts which may be filled with equal propriety by qualified persons from any section of the Queen's English-speaking subjects. To inquire how many, or which, of such posts are at present **held by British subjects residing in the Colonies**. Whether the number so arrived at is a fair and just proportion in view of the importance and population of the Colonial portions of the Empire. And whether, in case the proportion be found to be an unfair one, steps cannot be taken to offer **greater facilities to Colonists** to compete for and obtain such posts; and more especially to become members of the Civil Service of India, and of the diplomatic body.

(6) LEARNED PROFESSIONS.

Part of this inquiry has been already dealt with under the subject of Law. The creation of a **definite system of degrees and diplomas** in the medical, teaching, and scientific professions would obviously be an immense advantage. To some extent, thanks chiefly to the Universities, an interchange of qualifications already exists. The public want to know how the facts stand, and if the system can be mended.

(7) EMIGRATION.

This heading tells its own story. The Imperial Government foolishly forfeited all control over the common land of the Empire long ago. It can only people that land **by the consent of, and by arrangement with, several Colonial Governments.** The need is so obvious and pressing that some half-hearted steps have already been taken to meet it. We must now go further, and recognise that the best, if not the only, hope for England lies in the **well-organised and systematic emigration.**

(a, *Statistical Bureau*).

In this department everything is at present lacking. Let the Commission promptly take evidence as to the working of the Massachusetts Statistical Bureau. *Mutatis mutandis*, let them apply the information they obtain to the circumstances of the British Empire.

(b, *Labour Bureau*).

Mr. Mundella has already given his attention to this matter, and has wisely gone to **a practical Federationist** to help him. The secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers knows what it is to organise for London, Liverpool, Montreal, and Melbourne ; his association has already federated itself, and each of these centres is represented on its council. All that is wanted, therefore, is to give a proper extension to the new Government Department, and the Royal Commission has merely to direct its attention to the most effectual ways of carrying out the scheme of the Board of Trade.

(8 and 9) DIPLOMATIC AND TARIFF.

At present we do not propose to discuss these two items of the programme ; they must as yet be classed under the head of difficult and dangerous points. They will arise, of course, and have to be settled in due time ; when they are raised we shall

express the views which we have already clearly formed with regard to them. But it is well to **let nature take her course**, and in the course of nature these matters will be settled after the other items in the programme have been adjusted, as **a mere matter of sequence and necessity.**

(10) MISCELLANEOUS.

This last head gives a grand opportunity for friends of Federation to fill up the lamentable gaps in the foregoing most imperfect outline. As long as the great end and object is kept in view we shall not grumble with any complication of details which specialists may think desirable. Meanwhile, we believe that on the line indicated a Royal Commission may wisely and profitably direct its inquiries, and may by acquiring and formulating information with regard to them, do more to instruct public opinion and to further the cause of Federation—that is to say, **the cause of peace**—than any actual legislation at the present moment could probably accomplish.



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NATURE AND OBJECTS OF THE LEAGUE.

AT a Conference held in London on July 29th, 1884, the Right Hon. W. E. FORSTER, M.P., in the chair, it was unanimously resolved:—

1. That in order to secure the permanent unity of the Empire, some form of Federation is essential.

2. That for the purpose of influencing public opinion, both in the United Kingdom and the Colonies, by showing the incalculable advantages which will accrue to the whole Empire from the adoption of such a system of organisation, a Society be formed of men of all parties, to advocate and support the principles of Federation.

At the adjourned Conference, held on Tuesday, 18th November, 1884, the following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

That a Society be now formed, to be called "The Imperial Federation League."

That the object of the League be to secure by Federation the permanent unity of the Empire.

That no scheme of Federation should interfere with the existing rights of Local Parliaments as regards local affairs.

That any scheme of Imperial Federation should combine on an equitable basis the resources of the Empire for the maintenance of common interests, and adequately provide for an organised defence of common rights.

That the League use every constitutional means to bring about the objects for which it is formed, and invite the support of men of all political parties.

That the membership of the League be open to any British subject who accepts the principles of the League, and pays a yearly registration fee of not less than one shilling.

That donations and subscriptions be invited for providing means for conducting the business of the League.

That British subjects throughout the Empire be invited to become members, and to form and organise Branches of the League, which may place their representatives on the General Committee.